

Approved For Release 2005/01/13 : CIA-RDP88-01365R000300100005-1
Harvest Films, Inc. TRACHTENBERG, LEO

501 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017
OXFORD 7-4114

April 21, 1964

Mr. Paul Chretien
Ass't Director of Public Affairs
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Chretien:

I want to thank you for meeting with Miss Hall and me last week. Your brief primer in the history and purpose of Intelligence gave us a more clear view of the aims of the CIA.

We are now at work on a presentation for you, which we hope the CIA will consider at some point in the future.

I have enclosed a partial list of our productions and clients, any of whom may be called upon for reference. Should you wish to see our films, we will arrange to screen them for you on one of our Washington trips.

Harvest Films has complete facilities for the production of both 16 and 35mm films. We maintain a full time staff, and are equipped to handle all phases of production from initial script treatment through shooting and editing.

We realize the problems you confront in preparing any program of publicity. Perhaps the Agency will one day alter its present policy, and a film either for a target audience of key business and public leaders, or a general informational film for the American public will be considered.

I hope that we can meet again, and that we will have the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

Leo Trachtenberg
Leo Trachtenberg, Pres.

LT:jw
enc: 1

PRODUCTION

CLIENT

FOR ALL THE CHILDREN

Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund
16mm color 20 minutes

Chosen by the United States Information
Agency for showing at the Moscow International
Fair

IT'S UP TO YOU

National Society for the Prevention
of Blindness, Inc.
16mm color 12 minutes

Translated into four languages
Winner: Top Award, National Safety Council

JOHNNY'S NEW WORLD

National Society for the Prevention
of Blindness, Inc.
16mm color 18 minutes

Golden Reel Film Festival Winner

SCIENCE FIGHTS TOOTH DECAY

United States Public Health Service
16mm b&w 13½ minutes

DR. CARTER TAKES A DRIVE

New York State Department of Health
16mm color 20 minutes

THE ROAD BACK

New York State Department of Health
16mm b&w 13½ minutes

WORLD OF HELEN KELLER

American Foundation for the
Overseas Blind
16mm b&w 13½ minutes

Narrated by Katherine Cornell

WAGONS WEST

New York Life Insurance Company
16mm b&w 13½ minutes

FAIR CHANCE FOR TOMMY

National Society for the Prevention
of Blindness, Inc.
16mm b&w 12 minutes

GOLDEN GRAINS

School Educational
16mm color 20 minutes

HAYING TIME

School Educational
16mm color 20 minutes

WORKBOATS OF THE HARBORS	School Educational 16mm b&w 12 minutes
FACTS ABOUT FIGURES	New York State Department of Health 16mm color 13½ minutes
SCIENCE WRITERS ON FLUORIDATION	Child Welfare League 16mm b&w 15 minutes
A CHILD WAITS	Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies 16mm b&w 13½ minutes
BOOK DRIVE	New York Life Insurance Company 16mm b&w 12 minutes
NEW WORLDS OF VISION	New Jersey State Commission for the Blind 16mm color 20 minutes
BUSINESS WITH A BONUS	New Jersey State Commission for the Blind 16mm color 5 minutes
A SHARE IN THE FUTURE	New Jersey State Commission for the Blind 16mm color 5 minutes
A CHALLENGE TO SERVE	New York State Department of Health 16mm color 20 minutes
ON THE MOVE	New York Life Insurance Company 16mm color 13½ minutes
THE TRAP	National Society for Crippled Children & Adults 16mm b&w 20 minutes
SIGHT FOR A LIFETIME	National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc. 16mm color 20 minutes
THE SMARTEST KID IN TOWN	National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc. 16mm color 20 minutes

IN PRODUCTION

DON'T PUSH YOUR LUCK	National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc. 16mm color
Film on Construction of Building	New York Life Insurance Company 16mm color 35 minutes
Film on Foster Care Program	Jewish Child Care Association 16mm b&w 13½ minutes
Film on Friendly Town Program	Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund 16mm color

Also, TV spots for the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, Inc., CARE, International Social Service, Save The Children Federation, American Cancer Society, New York Tuberculosis & Health Association, American Foundation for the Overseas Blind, Herald Tribune Fresh Air Fund, Salvation Army, National Traveller's Aid Association, National Association for Mental Health, State Charities Aid Association; and many others.

Soc 4-01-4 Harvest
Films, Inc.

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Second: Get yourself a creative and business-like producer — two virtues that are not mutually exclusive. One who'll level with you about your film project, who has the courage *not* to play it so safe that your film ends up as an audience soporific.



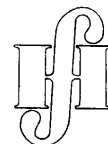
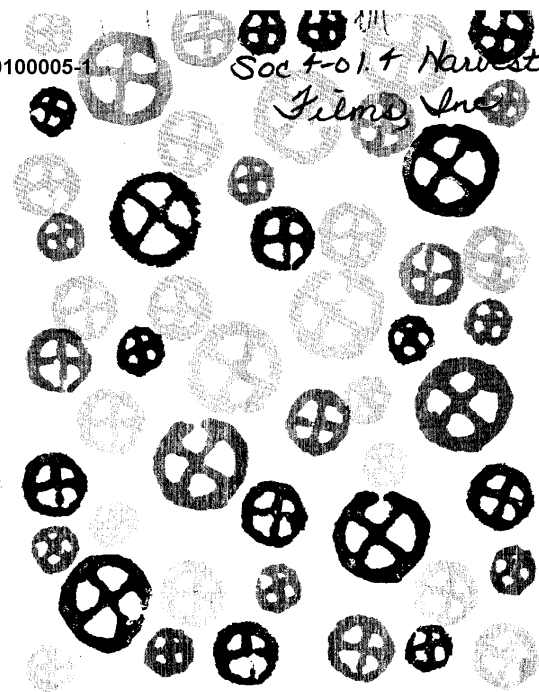
Where do you find such producers? Call us. We'll not only give you our own name, but (if pressed) the names of some respectable competitors as well.

We hope you enjoy the Harvest Filmletter. Subsequent issues will cover many aspects of film. If you would like future copies to be sent to friends or associates, just drop us a line; we will be happy to put them on our mailing list.

LEO TRACHTENBERG

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HARVEST FILMS, INC.
25 West 43rd Street
New York, N.Y. 10036
AN OCCASIONAL FILMLETTER.



HARVEST FILMS, INC.
FILMLETTER

**PLAYING IT SAFE
IN FILMLAND**

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PLAYING IT SAFE

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IN FILMLAND



For too many people in corporations, government, and private agencies, film production is a dark country, soggy underfoot, booby-trapped with strange devices of exotic complexity. To the outsider it's Show Biz (and that, as any CPA outside Hollywood can tell you, is No Biz). It's all those bug-eyed cameras and electronic gismos. It's actors sporting their Methods, and bearded directors clutching their egos. It's words like roll 'em, and *cinéma vérité*, and blimp, and swish pan, and jump cut, and crab dolly (not a crustacean, not a girl). And lights and zoom and agents and handsome females in dark glasses that wraparound from here to there. In short, it's dreamland and playland all rolled into one. In too many cases, Top Management is mystified by it all, managers are awed, PR men are bewildered. Too often, when usually knowledgeable and shrewd executives enter Filmland, they seize up in goggle-eyed wonder and decide, in sheer defense, to play it safe.



A favorite ploy, if the treasury can stand it, is to hire a consultant and charge *him* with doing the thinking. Another is to appoint a com-

mittee and charge *them* with doing the thinking. In either case, if the film bombs, you can blame *him* or *them* for the debacle.



Now there's nothing wrong with consultants — of the film variety or otherwise — if they have taste, experience, and independent judgment. But the danger is that a consultant might not possess these virtues in adequate measure. *He* may try to play it safe, to not rock the boat, and, in general, to stay clear of the heady wine of original thinking. As for committees, they are, by nature, the home of the consensus decision and consensus taste. And too great a reliance on committees, where creative judgments are concerned, can result in end products that are flat, homogenized.



You've seen them, those haphazard collections of celluloid, skittering through the projector at a nerveless clip. They're the films that play it safe. Sans style, sans taste, sans love, they're the films that try to please everyone — Top Management, Middle management, lower management, the man at home, the man in the street, the inner man, the outer man, and the man who

doesn't exist (quaintly called "the average man"). An anodyne to the senses, these films show up everywhere and convince, sell, educate, and motivate almost nobody.



So what do you do if you're charged with the responsibility of having a film made? How do you venture through the tinselled gates of Filmland? We suggest two constructive and logical measures.

First: Get on to the fact that once you strip away the golden chatter, making a film is subject to the same sound business principles and common sense needed to run any effective enterprise. There is no substitute for the self education that comes with experience and, ultimately, one is better off learning the sophistications and possibilities of the art rather than passing the responsibility on to someone else. If you ask enough probing questions and demand enough straight answers, you won't have to clutch for air when somebody tells you that the budget is "slightly over by \$11,000 because we had to A and B the duped pix before the fine grain mix, and anyway it rained that day in Sarasota, remember?"

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